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President: Mr. Razali Ismail . . . . . (Malaysia)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 10 (*continued*)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/51/1)

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: It is a source of pride and a privilege for us to see you, Sir, presiding over the General Assembly with such efficiency, dynamism and sensitivity; your presence gives us both pleasure and hope.

In this setting, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we observed and took part in a series of momentous statements on the universal nature of this Organization, as well as the formulation of solemn commitments to the principles and purposes that have guided and should continue to guide the future work of the United Nations.

However, predictably, during the past year the purposes and principles that have guided us for over 50 years have once again undergone unilateral interpretation. It seems that those commitments have become nothing more than a dead letter.

We believe that the Secretary-General was especially objective in noting that there have been

> "indications of a diminished willingness to engage the critical issues on the international agenda through the United Nations." *(A/51/1, para. 3)*

This is a core issue in today's world, and we should conduct an in-depth analysis of the causes of the problem and ways to remedy it.

For the vast majority of our nations, if not for all of us, the world is now even more insecure than in the past. Poverty is growing and wealth is becoming increasingly concentrated. The gulf between the North and the South is widening. Conflicts break out, and the United Nations is unable to find a way to resolve them. The ecological threat is becoming more serious and widespread every day.

Meanwhile, to the astonishment of the vast majority of humankind, simplistic and, in essence, colonial concepts, are being devised to make us believe that our poverty is our own fault and that so-called globalization consists of the globalization of wealth — wealth that is within our grasp if we are industrious and docile tools who submit to fashionable dictates.

However, the facts show that we can truly speak of globalization only in terms of problems and inequality. Only an arrogant villager can believe that the world ends at the edge of his own village, and we are aware of the challenges of the modern age — the technology, interdependence and intercommunication that make today's world different. The "globalized world" that

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some are trying to sell to us, however, is a unipolar world, one that is ungovernable because of the growing scale of its problems. Any illusion of world government is doomed to failure.

Never before has the United Nations faced such challenges, and never before have its principles and purposes been so threatened. Never has the United Nations faced such an acute dilemma between serving all or serving only a few. If the United Nations were deprived of the principle of the sovereign equality of States it would have no choice but to move inexorably towards becoming a caricature of world government; in other words, it would inevitably become a direct instrument of the super-Power of the end of this century.

These attempts at aggressive unilateral action, which are humiliating to the sovereignty of all, are already being felt today in every debate and negotiation, in the composition and election of the main bodies and positions in the United Nations, and in every peacekeeping operation. There is no problem more pressing, practical or concrete for the United Nations today than that of serving the legitimate interests of all its States Members, so that it does not become a hostage to or a tool of any one of them.

It would be physically impossible to cover, in just one speech, the whole range of ideas contained in the report of the Secretary-General. We are glad that this important document contains certain assertions which, in our view, represent an objective assessment of the successes and failures in the work of the United Nations at this stage in its history. I will therefore confine myself to commenting on the work of the Organization during this period and expressing our views on some ideas that have prevailed in its everyday activity.

The so-called financial crisis still exists, but its causes have now been clearly identified. It has become clear that it is a payments crisis, and that the political conditions imposed on such payments are unacceptable. The question is therefore whether the United Nations has the political capacity to make the country with the largest economy in the world, which is also the greatest beneficiary of the existence of this Organization, honour its commitments

(spoke in English)

in full, on time and without conditions.

(spoke in Spanish)

The conflicts that have cast a pall over the world, and which call for the attention of the United Nations, have not diminished. However, that is not because, apart from current financial constraints, the Organization has not allocated millions of dollars to peacekeeping operations; it is because it has not come to grips with the real causes of conflicts, and because artificial solutions have so often been imposed which, far from fostering a negotiated and objective settlement of conflicts, have been dictated by hegemonic interests. Peacekeeping operations have grown increasingly complex. The world is shaken by conflicts that are developing within the borders of sovereign States. In this respect the United Nations will face failure today and in the future so long as it continues to ignore the root causes and nature of internal conflicts and to be guided by philosophies that regard sovereignty and sovereign equality to be out of date, no matter how much money the advocates of such ideas may possess or how clever they may be at bookkeeping.

The disquieting decrease in resources allocated for development persists, but the origin of this situation does not lie in the lack of programmes or the absence of an agenda for development. The real causes of this phenomenon lie in the lack of political will to promote development on a worldwide scale. Developing countries cannot delegate to other international actors the primary responsibility that should be assumed by the United Nations as the real manager of international cooperation.

The reduction of the resources allocated for development is also a result of the fact that, although the relationship between peace and development is rightly noted by most of the world, it has hardly become the motto of the developed countries. This is unfortunate. This phenomenon is also a result of the fact that some Member States insist on preaching that the right to development, an incipient institution of international law, should not be subject to the needed codification. They also seek to silence the international community's rejection of disorder and inequality in international economic relations and in the imposition of conditions for development cooperation.

We support the entire statement made by the representative of Colombia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, especially the proposal that development be discussed in a separate chapter of the report of the Secretary-General.

The institutional and structural imbalance of the Organization is growing. However, this cannot be attributed to lack of analysis or of radical approaches to the issue. Legitimate and reasonable proposals genuinely to strengthen and revitalize the functions of the General Assembly have met only with resistance and have been answered by compromise solutions and conditions that offer the elimination of items from the agenda as the only viable alternative.

Necessary reform of the membership of the Security Council and improvement in its methods and working procedures continue to be priority issues for most Member States. However, the Working Group entrusted with this matter will not be in a position during this session to submit a report reflecting progress in its work. This is because of the lack of flexibility of certain delegations, which continue to approach such reform from a discriminatory perspective that is incompatible with the principle of the sovereign equality of all States.

We cannot speak of genuine reform of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council or any other body as long as some Member States insist on keeping the anachronistic privilege of the veto — or even the threat to use the veto, which has become a sort of concealed veto used to avoid public consequences — or on maintaining a double standard whereby all States are equal, but some are more equal than others.

Cuba agrees with the Secretary-General with regard to the long deliberations that have taken place in the framework of the Informal Open-ended Working Group on an Agenda for Peace. However, it is precisely the sensitive and controversial nature of the ideas being considered in those deliberations that make it necessary objectively and impartially to reflect the various trends and positions that have emerged from that Working Group. It would be counterproductive to try to promote definitions, ideas and trends that have been rejected by a significant number of States in the Working Group. We might agree with the assertion contained in the report of the Secretary-General that

> "Member States continue to attach importance to preventive diplomacy and peacemaking as the most cost-effective ways" *(A/51/1, para. 651)*

of dealing with disputes.

Nonetheless, we should also point out that, contrary to this view, many States have expressed their opinions on such ways and means — or "alternatives" — from a substantive, comprehensive and critical perspective.

Cuba believes that preventive diplomacy and peacemaking cannot be conceived or applied on the basis of cost-benefit analysis, especially given that it has not been possible to reach consensus on the definition of any of these concepts. We must recognize that, in the opinion of many Member States, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking should be conceived solely as diplomatic means to prevent the escalation of a dispute and its possible development into a conflict. Cuba associates itself with this position.

Furthermore, we understand that the Secretary-General's ideas on such concepts as preventive deployment or preventive action and the possible replacement of the Organization's diplomatic efforts with preventive action, have not yet been negotiated substantively, and have not yet received the necessary consensus. It is clear that the report of the Secretary-General does not place the necessary emphasis on the principle of consent — a principle that many of us define as a cornerstone of any United Nations diplomatic initiative, an element which should always prevail over any attempts to implement or impose an artificial peace that might derive from or turn into an act of interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign State.

Those are our comments on the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization. We disagree with some aspects of the document, as well as with some of the ideas and trends supported in it. However, we support the Secretary-General's approach to many issues, although we believe that important aspects of the work of the Organization have been left out of the report or are stated without having been arrived at by consensus.

Cuba believes that the United Nations of the twenty-first century will be effective only to the extent that its objectives and actions succeed in striking the right balance between the solidity and validity of the principles enshrined in the Charter and its concerted response to current and future challenges.

The United Nations will not be strong and effective if it allows cardinal principles of international law, such as respect for sovereignty, the territorial integrity of States and the right of States freely to choose their political, economic and social system, to succumb to unilateral political interests and the imposition of models.

Cuba is ready to make its contribution, in a spirit of constructiveness and flexibility, to the United Nations of the future so as to enable it truly to respond to the interests of all its sovereign and equal Members.

Mr. Wang Xuexian (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: My statement will be brief.

At the outset, the Chinese delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his annual report on the work of the Organization. The report reviews the work of the Organization and the progress it has made in various fields over the past year. It also identifies the problems and difficulties confronting it. We wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his commendable and tireless efforts in fulfilling the mission entrusted to him by this Organization and in enhancing the role of the United Nations. We also wish to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the Secretariat for their hard work despite the shortage of financial and human resources.

Last year, we gathered here solemnly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The leaders of all the countries that participated once again reaffirmed their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter and expressed their readiness to help the United Nations better to meet the challenges of the new century. Over the past year, this Organization has made many efforts to alleviate regional conflicts, bring the question of social development to the attention of the international community and push forward its own reforms. However, there are also disturbing trends: The question of development fails to get due attention, the financial difficulties of the United Nations are increasing and the role of the United Nations is being weakened.

Peace and development are the two most important issues in the world today. Given the current international situation, the question of development, particularly in the vast number of developing countries, has increasingly come to the fore. Preventing conflicts, restoring stability, eradicating poverty and achieving the objectives of social development are, without exception, closely linked to economic development. The United Nations has a unique and important role to play in the field of development. However, recent years have witnessed a further decline in the position of the United Nations in the economic and development fields, as is shown by the shortage of funds and the shrinking operations of United Nations development agencies. In the past year, the level of resources made available for development, including through the United Nations system, has continued to drop. Official development assistance from the developed countries has declined even further, year by year, to a mere 0.27 per cent in 1995, a level far below the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent. This is an important issue, and United Nations assistance is required to promote the economic development of all countries, particularly the developing ones, and to eradicate poverty. The role of the United Nations in the field of development should therefore be strengthened rather than weakened. The United Nations will be able to prove itself worthy of its name in the twenty-first century only when it treats development issues in the same way as it treats international conflicts.

The financial crisis of the United Nations is another pressing issue that merits our attention. In recent years, the Organization has been shrouded in the shadow of a financial crisis. According to the latest Secretariat statistics, as of early September this year Member States owed the Organization over $2.9 billion, of which $1.6 billion were owed by the largest contributor. The serious financial difficulties confronting the Organization have not only hampered its effective operation, but also impaired its reputation. The financial crisis is, in the final analysis, a payment crisis resulting from delayed payment by a few Member States — in particular the major contributor — of their assessed contributions to the regular and peacekeeping budgets. It is obviously unjustifiable for a certain major contributor to withhold payment of its assessed contributions on the basis of the need for reform of the United Nations, a position that has naturally met with wide opposition from Member States. The practice of making irresponsible remarks and unwarranted accusations against the United Nations on the one hand and, on the other, withholding the payment of assessed contributions to the United Nations over a long period, is of no help at all to genuine reform of the United Nations. We urge the countries concerned to fulfil their financial obligations as set out in the Charter by unconditionally paying in full without further delay.

It is the need of our era as well as the desire of the general membership to carry out appropriate and rational reform of the United Nations. In the past year, the relevant working groups of the General Assembly have conducted useful discussions on various aspects of reform. The ultimate aim of United Nations reform is not reform itself and should not be construed as merely streamlining the administrative structure, cutting expenditure and reducing staff. What is more important is for reform to enable the United Nations to adapt itself

better to changes and development in the world situation, so as more effectively to achieve the purposes and principles of the Charter and play a more positive role in promoting peace and development, thereby better serving the entire membership. In brief, the structure and scale of the United Nations should be suited to its mandates.

Reform not only involves the future of the United Nations, but is also closely linked to the interests of the entire membership. It should be emphasized that major reform plans for all areas of the United Nations, including the Secretariat, should be subject to full discussion by the general membership and confirmed and endorsed by the majority of Member States, rather than formulated according to the will of a small number of countries, still less to that of one single country. Only in that way can reform be successful and its objectives achieved.

In recent years, the United Nations has played a positive role in alleviating and resolving conflicts and has also made useful efforts in trying to consolidate peace and prevent the recurrence of conflicts. We expect the United Nations to make greater efforts to address the deep-rooted causes of conflicts. At the same time, it should be emphasized that we are living in a world of diversity. Countries differ from one another in their social systems, values, level of development, historical tradition, religious belief and cultural background. Without diversity, there can be no world as we know it; and without diversity, there can be no United Nations. The United Nations must have a clear understanding of this situation and base its peacemaking and peace-building practices on it.

The United Nations has followed an unusual course for half a century. It remains the most important intergovernmental and international Organization in the world today and its role in international, political and economic life is unique and indispensable, although, as a result of its various failures and difficulties, its achievements still fall short of the expectations of all countries. The United Nations needs our support just as we need it to exist. The Chinese delegation hopes that consideration of the report of the Secretary-General will help Member States to summarize more cogently the experience of the United Nations and define further its main tasks so that it can live up to the expectations of all countries by better accomplishing the solemn mission entrusted to it.

Mr. Cassar (Malta): Allow me to thank the Secretary-General for his detailed report. It highlights the priorities set by Member States for the Organization and analyses the manner in which it is meeting these identified needs.

Emerging political, social and economic situations continue to challenge our Organization. Yet the United Nations remains the only forum in which Member States meet daily to deliberate on issues. As problems become more complex, the greater becomes the need for this forum, in which States formulate and pledge their required cooperation. The inability of most societies to contain or address certain issues purely within their national boundaries has given renewed impetus to our Organization.

These evolving needs now pose an institutional challenge requiring adaptation. The report details the reform measures already introduced. Reform has been and is still under way. Individual instances of streamlining require a clear perception of the ultimate objective of such exercises. The focus of our efforts should remain the vision that inspires and guides reform. The core principles that formed the base on which the United Nations was founded are the measures by which we assess the success and weakness of our Organization. They remain our beacons.

The report of the Secretary-General has grown considerably longer over the years. This is partly due to the increase in areas serviced by the United Nations, but it is also a response to the call for transparency. The report is not a mere checklist to put on record the efforts of the Organization and its Member States. It is an opportunity to be introspective, to analyse our undertakings more closely and to identify what needs to be buttressed and what needs to be streamlined. It indicates our willingness to examine how our mandate may be put into action more effectively to benefit the peoples who form the international community.

The human imperative has transformed the United Nations into a symbol of hope for millions. The Secretary-General stresses the equal importance of our commitment to building a global society that rests on social justice and the continued assistance of the United Nations to the victims of man-made or natural disasters. Peacekeeping and conflict prevention are essential elements of this engagement. The details provided by the Secretary-General are a stark reminder that the world community cannot limit its action to providing assistance only during or in the immediate aftermath of disaster.

There are innumerable instances of tragic situations that fail to attract the continued attention of the media even though the suffering of millions persists. The United Nations has kept alive its consistent commitment to these victims, be they the populations affected by the Chernobyl catastrophe, Somali or Palestinian refugees or those who live the daily agony of extreme poverty and exclusion.

As the Prime Minister of Malta, Mr. Edward Fenech Adami, said at the World Summit for Social Development,

> "The tasks ahead are not easy, but the cry of millions of infants worldwide whose lives are threatened by hunger should be enough to consolidate our resolve. Our commitment is a debt owed to future generations."

Awareness needs to be translated into the will to engage. That is what the United Nations is doing.

The development of international humanitarian law reflects our commitment to containing the impact of war. This aspect of the Organization's work requires constant attention and further focus. It stems from the innate dignity of each human being, which inspires the laws of all nations and the United Nations in particular. The promotion and protection of human rights is another key aspect of this humanitarian imperative. This important hallmark of United Nations commitment has changed the international environment. This focus on human rights has been instrumental in demolishing the walls behind which authoritarian regimes that trampled upon human dignity sought to hide. It has inspired and enabled us to combat the violation of human rights and to restore social justice, freedom and progress.

Rio de Janeiro, Vienna, Cairo, Copenhagen, Beijing and Istanbul have become landmarks in our common search to consolidate our commitment to furthering the right to dignity, justice and development for all human beings. The follow-up to these recent United Nations conferences remains central to undertakings by our Organization. Effective action to realize the provisions of agreed platforms requires not only the means but also the streamlining of effort and activity. The Secretary-General lists many instances in which United Nations offices have pooled resources and cooperated on projects. Such efforts are welcome; ultimately they yield better results.

Similarly, the section on joint programmes for development outlines the varied manner in which the United Nations has addressed this important aspect of its mandate. Together with the rule of law and respect for human rights, development is and remains a major focus in the promotion of peace and prosperity. Freedom from want is a vital aspect of this humanitarian imperative.

In the introduction to his report, the Secretary-General underlines the importance of renewal and reform. The commemorations of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations provided Member States with the opportunity collectively to renew their commitment to the Charter and to underline the need for a process of sustained reform. In his statement to the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System, the Secretary-General rightly pointed out that

> "reform — indeed change in the Organization — should be perceived not as an imposition, not as compromising the objectives of the Charter, but as adapting structures and methods to the new global environment that the Organization has helped to bring about." *(A/51/1, para. 6)*

The measure by which the system's functions may be assessed is the Charter. It establishes the principles on which our work is based, guided and furthered. These principles survived the cold war. They inspired social and economic progress, the protection of human rights and justice and security. They should continue to guide us in our new, changed and challenging international environment.

As we review and renew the structures of our Organization, an expanded Security Council and a revitalized General Assembly remain institutional priorities. Consensus-building is a key to the achievement of progress in these two important areas of reform. The risks that procrastination carries are many. International peace and security is confronted by new, complex threats that make its maintenance — the primary responsibility of the Security Council — more difficult. Inflexible positions will not assist us in making progress.

Equally important is the principle of the sovereign equality of States, which is fundamental to this Organization and particularly to the role of the General Assembly. The process of the revitalization of the General Assembly and its enhanced relationship with the Security Council should not be held hostage to agreement in other distinct areas.

Cooperation on the institutional level helps avoid duplication. It is cost-effective and provides an opportunity for enhanced sharing of information and expertise. It gives us the opportunity better to identify problem areas — those that overlap or are not addressed at all. Recent enhancement of cooperation between the Bretton Woods institutions and the Economic and Social Council is one such example.

There is a need to apply such a coordinated approach to areas of the common heritage of humankind. This concept, based on the principle of trust, is an integral part of a number of conventions and resolutions that ascribe responsibility for different areas of common heritage to specific international institutions. Malta believes that the Trusteeship Council should be entrusted with such coordination — an initiative first launched by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malta, Mr. Guido de Marco, when he was President of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

At the fiftieth session, Malta submitted a draft resolution on the review of the role of the Trusteeship Council, which was later adopted by the General Assembly. Member States were requested to submit their views on the future of the Council, which several did. Our proposal is based on the necessity to preserve the institutional balance within the Organization — a balance that preserves the basic principles on which the Charter was founded. The Trusteeship Council, a principal organ of the United Nations, should continue to exist because of its present potential under the Charter, the principles of which it is depositary, with regard to current and emerging realities. Malta's proposal has prompted a range of opinions and views. Aware of the time it takes for ideas to mature and consensus to emerge, we look forward to further discussion.

Later this month the world community will witness the inauguration of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea — the fruit of a long negotiating process and proof of the world community's will and persistence in fostering cooperation and resolving the complex issues codified by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

This same will and persistence should remain with us as we address and map out cooperation in other complex areas, ranging from trans-boundary pollution to drug trafficking, and from overfishing to money laundering. Enhanced codification of international law is a means by which States are given the tools not only to exercise restraint, but also to find recourse to mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The United Nations has been and remains the unique forum for such cooperation.

The United Nations is at a crossroads. As we move into the next millennium, the vision of a world at peace, which inspires our action, requires constant renewal to ensure present and future generations their share of dignity, social justice and freedom. This Organization has provided the inspiration and means for the birth, survival and growth of States. It has been and continues to be the main forum in which the principles that guide the behaviour of States develop and evolve.

During the past 50 years, many people have examined the United Nations and questioned its existence and performance. No one has ever called into question the need for a continued commitment to the principles that gave birth to the United Nations. Those principles remain at the core of our daily effort.

The spirit of solidarity that bonds human beings and societies has helped us to overcome obstacles and challenges to peace. It is this same spirit that continues to unite our nations.

Mr. Blukis (Latvia): My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and future-oriented report on the work of the Organization. The report deserves an exhaustive analysis, but that is not a practical choice for one delegation. However, the Prime Minister of Latvia, in his statement to the Assembly on 24 September 1996, presented the views of Latvia on matters pertaining to the major substantive categories covered by the Secretary-General's report.

This supplementary statement can therefore be brief. It is a response to the information on United Nations reform presented in chapters I, II and V of the report of the Secretary-General. It also takes into account relevant information presented in the recently issued progress report of the Efficiency Board to the Secretary-General, as well as the even more recent comments thereon by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management.

In paragraphs 8 to 16 of his report, the Secretary-General describes what has been accomplished at three levels of institutional reform: intergovernmental, organizational and managerial. My delegation will comment on the state of reforms on the

intergovernmental level, a matter the Secretary-General barely touches upon, since these reforms are outside his sphere of responsibility.

My delegation agrees with previous speakers that reforms on the intergovernmental level lag behind reforms on the organizational and managerial levels. It is the responsibility of the relevant intergovernmental bodies, in particular this Assembly, to remedy the lag. I will make several suggestions in this regard that the General Assembly might find useful. First, the General Assembly should examine the possibility of establishing a system of self-management that, like the management of the Secretariat, would be mission-driven and results-oriented, in place of the present procedure-driven and resolution-oriented system.

Secondly, priority should be given to reaching a framework agreement or separate agreements for different reform areas on the general shape of the reforms of intergovernmental bodies that are to be implemented in the foreseeable future. A framework agreement or agreements could guide the further work of the working groups that are dealing with reform.

To date, the working groups have devoted most of their efforts to gathering and examining the details, or bricks, from which reform could be built. What is missing is the plan or framework needed to decide which bricks are necessary and what kind of bricks have yet to be found or made in order to build reform. My delegation sincerely hopes that other delegations will seriously examine these suggestions and offers its cooperation.

Mr. Reyn (Belgium) *(interpretation from French)*: As the General Assembly considers the report on the work of the Organization, for which I thank the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, I wish to emphasize some of the topics that my Government considers especially important.

First of all, I wish to confirm that we fully endorse the Secretary-General's assessment that, in an international system that has once again become multipolar, the Organization itself is in the process of radical change and its future, more than ever, depends on improving the way it is financed and functions. In this respect, implementation of the plan for general management reform will play a decisive role. We have noted the efforts made under difficult conditions by the Secretariat in the areas of cost structure, human resources, information and technology, for which we are grateful.

In order to guarantee the long-term future of the United Nations as it goes through the necessary changes, we must also make sure that it is financially sound. In this regard, reform and financing have to go hand in hand. The obligation of all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions, and to pay their arrears must be respected. Naturally, we may consider adapting means of payment, in a way yet to be determined, in cases where it may be necessary. Certainty of payment will, moreover, allow us to avoid a situation in which the Secretary-General has to resort to perilous financial operations to maintain a shaky budgetary balance. In addition, the uncertainty that weighs over the financing of peacekeeping operations may pose problems for United Nations troop-contributing countries. Finally, we hope to be able to count on the universal will to adapt financing machinery to the realities of today. Predictability of resources and the balanced apportionment of contributions are the two pillars of the new, healthy financial basis that our Organization needs so badly.

As I had the opportunity to remind the Assembly last year, my Government is following with great attention the efforts to adapt United Nations bodies and instruments to the challenges of economic and social development. For sure, progress has been made. The Secretary-General has noted that progress in his report. We nonetheless feel that refocusing the activity of the agencies and funds of the United Nations must continue and that the coordination of development activities, both at Headquarters and in the field, can be improved further. We fully support the proposals made by the European Union in these fields and we hope that work on an Agenda for Development and the implementation of the proposals contained in resolution 50/227 on the restructuring and revitalization of the Organization in the economic and social fields will lead to concrete results at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly. We have also noted with great interest the importance the Secretary-General attaches to the problems of development: global development, as described in his report, in particular development in Africa. We believe that the mid-term review conducted a few weeks ago is proof that Member States share the same concern.

The role of the United Nations with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security has increased substantially in recent years. The Organization will continue to be called on to maintain peace, in conflicts both between States and within States. This development has led us to supplement traditional

peacekeeping instruments and to implement a policy that incorporates political, economic, social and humanitarian components within the framework of what is now known as preventive diplomacy and which the Secretary-General has quite rightly baptized as "preventive action". This is not really a new concept, but the multidimensional approach, on the other hand, deserves our full attention. No matter how attractive they are, preventive diplomacy and preventive action will probably not always be possible.

In our view, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is one of the areas for action in preventive diplomacy. Like many, if not all Governments, our Government remains highly committed to the principle of the universality of human rights as the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna reminded us in 1993. Ensuring respect for these rights — and here we do not just mean in conflict situations, but also and mainly in countries in times of peace — is the primary responsibility of Member States and their Governments before the international community. In this respect, existing United Nations machinery deserves our support, not least in terms of financing. Furthermore, a special effort should be made with regard to international humanitarian law, which has been systematically trampled upon in recent years. I am talking not about preparing new texts or new treaties, but quite simply about the most elementary respect for existing law.

One of the most outstanding results of the work of the United Nations has undoubtedly been the signing by a large number of States from all regional groups of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. My country welcomes this and we urge all United Nations Member States to sign and ratify this Treaty, which the Secretary-General quite rightly called an historic landmark. But we also share his disappointment at the poor results of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious and its work on Protocol II. Belgium will work unremittingly to achieve a complete ban on the production, use and export of anti-personnel landmines.

In conclusion, I would like once again to emphasize the usefulness of this report and its consolidated and forward-looking approach, which will help us set the parameters to guide our work at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: As the Assembly debates the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization today, my delegation feels that it is only fair to pay tribute to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for several outstanding achievements. First, we in Kuwait view with admiration and pride the efficient manner in which the Secretary-General guides this vital institution, which has a significant and direct impact on international and human relations. We would like to place on record our full appreciation for the enormous efforts he has made and continues to make with a view to streamlining and enhancing the efficiency of the United Nations, which was created to promote peace, security and development by fulfilling the aspirations of all humankind in those areas.

The significance of the report before us today cannot be overemphasized, since it outlines in perceptive detail the full spectrum of United Nations activities and programmes, including the reform of the Organization's administrative structures, development and humanitarian activities, and the prevention, control and resolution of international disputes. The timing of discussions on this report is well chosen, as it comes immediately after the general debate in the plenary meetings of the Assembly.

Mr. Nsanze (Burundi), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Thus, Member States can analyse and evaluate the functions of the General Assembly and the means available to it for fulfilling its mandates through the Secretariat. This will ultimately enable Member States to define their positions or their priority concerns in the context of the General Assembly's scope and functions.

The importance we attach to the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization can be explained by the wealth of information it contains and by its perceptive analyses of the issues and international disputes being dealt with by the United Nations and the international community. Today, I should like to draw attention to the case of my own country, which is of great concern to the United Nations, as the Secretary-General notes in chapter IV, section D of his report, "Current activities in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping," under item 16, "Iraq-Kuwait." In this connection I would note that the Secretary-General deplores Iraq's continuing failure to comply with a number of Security Council resolutions, especially those calling upon it to release Kuwaiti and third-country nationals being held as prisoners and hostages and its failure to return Kuwaiti property seized by Iraq during its barbaric occupation of my country.

The Secretary-General also expresses his concern over the non-compliance by the Government of Iraq with the demands and obligations set forth in relevant Security Council resolutions, and he states:

> "It is a matter of great concern to me that more than 600 Kuwaiti and third-country nationals are still missing in Iraq, and I once again call upon Iraq to comply fully with its obligations in this regard." *(A/51/1, para. 829)*

With regard to the Kuwaiti property seized by Iraq, the Secretary-General says:

> "The return of property seized by Iraq to Kuwait is another of Iraq's obligations. ... Of particular concern to me are those items which are irreplaceable, including archives belonging to the Offices of the Amir, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and the Foreign Ministry. Other missing items of particular significance are properties belonging to Kuwait's Ministry of Defence." *(ibid., para. 830)*

The fact that the Secretary-General expresses his personal concern over Iraq's continued failure to comply with its formal obligations under Security Council resolutions, especially with regard to prisoners, hostages and property, proves the importance of those issues, which Kuwait has persistently stressed on all occasions and in all forums. Furthermore, the statement by the Secretary-General that the Government of Iraq has failed to fulfil its obligations in regard to those two matters refutes the claims made by high-ranking Iraqi officials that the release of Kuwaiti hostages and the return of Kuwaiti property are obligations that Iraq has fulfilled and that Kuwait and the States of the coalition have exaggerated their repeated claims with a view to increasing pressure on the Government of Iraq and further isolating it. These are indeed priority issues, and Kuwait has constantly emphasized them as being the major yardstick to be used by members of the Security Council to ascertain the extent of Iraq's compliance with its resolutions.

Moving to facts on the ground, I should like to inform the Assembly that Iraq has not as yet released one single Kuwaiti prisoner, nor has it closed a single one of the prisoner-related dossiers that were submitted to the Government of Iraq some three years ago. In fact, Iraq is continuing to exploit for propaganda purposes its purported cooperation with the Tripartite Commission and its technical subcommittee, which are sparing no effort to resolve this issue. Instead of returning seized Kuwaiti property, Iraq is using certain items of that property to threaten the sovereignty and stability of Kuwait. By that I mean Iraq's use of some Kuwaiti military vehicles and hardware stolen in the military exercise carried out in October 1994.

Accordingly, Kuwait once again calls upon the Government of Iraq to expedite the implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly those regarding the release without further delay of prisoners and hostages and the return of all stolen Kuwaiti property.

In closing, I wish to express once again our deep gratitude to the Secretary-General for his remarkable efforts in pursuing the long-standing goals of humankind, namely, peace, security and development, as set forth in the United Nations Charter. After all, the United Nations was created to fulfil the aspirations of people to live in a harmonious and stable world.

Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine): The delegation of Ukraine notes with satisfaction that today we are witnessing increasingly perceptible efforts by the General Assembly to reform and modernize the United Nations, the goal set by the Heads of State and Government at the special commemorative meeting held at the Assembly's fiftieth session.

This has been proved by intensive deliberations in the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, the Informal Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Peace, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development, the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations and the Open-Ended High-Level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System, all of which, we hope, will bear positive results.

Today, therefore, we can speak of some progress having been made within the framework of these Working Groups during the past year. Naturally, we do not mean that a breakthrough has been achieved, but we are sure that another step forward has been made.

The Informal Open-ended Working Group on an Agenda for Peace has continued its deliberations on the four key areas it had identified, namely, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking, post-conflict peace-building,

coordination and the question of sanctions imposed by the United Nations.

My delegation is grateful to the coordinators of each of the four sub-groups on those problems, namely, the representatives of Australia, Singapore, Norway and Brazil, for their tireless efforts, and we state our full support for their commitment to achieving real progress in the work of those sub-groups.

However, my delegation would like to comment on both the form and the substance of deliberations in the Working Group, in general, and in its sub-groups, in particular.

The most important failure of the Informal Open-ended Working Group, as we see it, was the lack of activity on the part of delegations in elaborating and submitting specific proposals and formulating conceptual approaches. Unfortunately, Member States relied mainly on the innovative approach of the coordinators and, consequently, concentrated on criticism of the drafts they had prepared. As a result, many valuable ideas were not reflected in the papers presented.

At the same time, the coordinators of the subgroups were unable to benefit from the suggestions submitted by a number of delegations. Oddly enough, in elaborating their papers delegations strongly rejected using a scientific approach, which could have helped to solve many problems. It is regrettable that delegations were not in a position to reach agreement on such simple issues as actors, types and forms of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building.

My delegation notes with satisfaction that the Secretary-General of the United Nations and its Secretariat have begun on their own to implement proposals made by Member States during the discussion of the Supplement to the Agenda for Peace, not waiting for the results of the Working Group's deliberations. We welcome the creation within the Secretariat of a standing Oversight Group of senior officers, which reviews potential and/or ongoing crisis situations on the basis of information provided by the designated officers.

The Ukrainian delegation considers the creation of such a Group to be an important step towards the establishment of a special group of experts on conflicts, which would not only monitor but would conduct early-warning analysis and propose specific actions. My delegation has repeatedly pointed out here the need to establish such a group.

We cannot but support the Secretary-General's conclusion that:

> "the prevention of conflicts through early warning, quiet diplomacy and, in some cases, preventive deployment, is better than undertaking major politico-military efforts to resolve conflicts after they have broken out." *(A/51/1, para. 644)*

In this context, I would draw attention to the proposal made by the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, at the special commemorative meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations with regard to the establishment of United Nations trusteeship and monitoring of the development of processes in new and restored democracies in order to prevent the use of force and ensure respect for the established rules of international law. Such machinery could draw upon the positive experience gained from the monitoring of migration flows in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and their various neighbouring countries by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Ukraine has always understood the term "preventive diplomacy" in a broader sense. Therefore, we welcome the proposal of the Secretary-General with regard to changing the term "preventive diplomacy" to "preventive action". In fact, recent United Nations experience has shown that there are several other forms of action that can have a useful preventive effect, namely, preventive deployment, preventive disarmament, preventive arms embargo, preventive humanitarian action and so on.

Preventive peace-building, in our view, also deserves due attention and careful consideration. In this respect, we hope that the thought-provoking proposal of the Secretary-General will facilitate the successful completion of the work of the sub-groups on preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peace-building.

I would like also to elaborate briefly on the issue of economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council, which was the focus of work in one of the sub-groups. Notwithstanding the successful result of its work, as embodied in the agreed text of the document, the

delegation of Ukraine is not enthusiastic about the contents. Unfortunately, one of the most important and complex issues — the negative impact of economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council on third States — was not even discussed in the sub-group. We cannot agree with that approach when unwillingness to deal with the problem is motivated by lack of time or by the problem's complexity.

The delegation of Ukraine does not find persuasive the allusions to the fact that the issue is anticipated in the Sixth Committee within the framework of discussions on the application of Article 50 of the United Nations Charter. The problem of the negative impact of economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council has long ago outgrown Article 50. It should be examined through the prism of strengthening the effectiveness of such sanctions.

The inability of the world community to provide a swift and effective answer to the problems arising from the application of sanctions threatens to undermine trust in the very institution of sanctions. This, in turn, calls into question the principle of collective United Nations action in implementing enforcement measures. In order to contribute to working out adequate approaches to solving the problem of the negative impact on third States of economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council, the delegation of Ukraine has submitted for the consideration of Member States an aide-mémoire on the position of Ukraine on the problems of implementation of economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council (A/51/226). We regret that this important issue on the agenda of the Informal Open-ended Working Group has not found a reflection in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization we are now discussing.

The financial crisis of the United Nations has reached dramatic proportions and taken on a chronic character. It has become one of the main factors negatively affecting United Nations activities. Today, when the Organization is being called upon to play an entirely new role in peacemaking and in the maintenance of peace and security, in the promotion of sustainable development, in the implementation of humanitarian operations and in the protection of human rights, its existing financial system appears to be unable to provide it with the capacity or flexibility that would enable it to respond expeditiously to the new challenges facing it.

The delegation of Ukraine shares the view that ensuring a viable financial base for the United Nations depends in the first place on the political will and commitment of Member States to meet their financial obligations in full and on time. At the same time, the deepening of the financial crisis is an immediate result of our inability to find appropriate solutions to the complex issues raised in the framework of the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations.

All of us should demonstrate the political will to avoid mutual accusations and intolerance in the working procedures of this important body. The financial rehabilitation of the Organization can be achieved only through joint effort. Ukraine supports the proposals aimed at reforming the United Nations financial mechanism, including the existing system of the apportionment of expenses and the scale for peacekeeping operations. The first stage of their practical implementation should be the adoption of a draft resolution determining the parameters for the formulation of the scale of assessments for the period 1998-2000 at the fifty-first regular — and I would repeat the word "regular" — session of the General Assembly.

We are deeply convinced that the achievement of consensus on a draft resolution providing for the fair apportionment of United Nations expenses among Member States would facilitate agreement on carrying out the other elements of the financial reform. The efforts of some Member States to promote other approaches only complicate the deliberations in the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations.

The delegation of Ukraine also expects that in drawing up the provisions for financial reform adequate account will be taken of the situation of those Member States that have accumulated arrears for reasons beyond their control.

In conclusion, I wish to assure the Assembly that the delegation of Ukraine will continue to play an active and constructive role in the efforts undertaken by the world community to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations.

Mr. Rana (Nepal): We are pleased to see Mr. Razali Ismail of Malaysia presiding over the deliberations of the General Assembly with dignity, firmness, dexterity and efficiency. I would venture to say that he has taken an important step in supplementing the ongoing reform process at the United Nations. He has the full cooperation and support of my delegation.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement today, a statement whose principal purpose, as we understand it, is to assist the Secretary-General in the preparation of better and better reports in the future. We acknowledge without reservation that the present report, in its form and content, represents a distinct improvement over the reports of previous years.

We are of the view that the Secretary-General's annual report is not only a report on the state of the Organization but also a reflection on the activities of the Secretary-General during the year in all the areas outlined in Chapter XV of the Charter. In that light, it is clearly evident that Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali is an outstanding Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The delegation of Nepal is grateful for his tenacious and tireless efforts for peace. He has spared no effort to achieve better management of the Organization. As the Foreign Minister of Nepal, Mr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, has noted, Mr. Boutros-Ghali has succeeded in large measure in giving shape to the deliberations of the United Nations through his far-reaching proposals in the Agendas for Peace and for Development. His keen interest in the socio-economic area, in the environment and in the fields of women, children and human rights is well known. No one has more eloquently pleaded the case for democracy and human rights, better emphasized the need for greater help to the weaker and the needy, and been a stronger advocate of the case of the developing countries — in particular the least developed among them — than has the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The ongoing reform process of the United Nations must take us in one direction, towards an Organization that is well equipped, financed and structured to serve effectively the purposes for which it was established. It must not fail to serve the needs and aspirations of the peoples of the world in whose name the Charter of the United Nations was signed. That was the vision of the Heads of State and Government of Member countries who assembled last year on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization. That continues to be our vision today.

Mr. Kamal (Pakistan): I would like to congratulate the Secretary-General for the presentation of his fifth report on the work of the Organization. The report successfully captures many of the broad trends in the evolution of our Organization.

We agree with the Secretary-General that the United Nations is in the midst of a dramatic transformation. This process of transformation and transition has not been smooth. The United Nations has been attempting for many years now to put in place a workable and enduring international system.

Although some forward movement has been made, the role of the United Nations in the post-cold-war period has to be more clearly understood and defined. New patterns of international cooperation are emerging. Some attempts are being made to redefine the very purposes and principles of the Charter. The greatest threat to the United Nations today is the trend towards neo-isolationism and neo-provincialism. Poor nations of the world are being told to solve their economic problems themselves. Nations locked into conflicts are being left at the mercy of powerful aggressors. The United Nations must reverse these dangerous trends.

The Secretary-General has reported that the voluntary resources coming into United Nations funds and programmes have declined over the last year. The flow of official development assistance from Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries has declined to 0.27 per cent of gross national product as against the agreed United Nations target of 0.7 per cent.

In order to build the foundations of peace, we should not undermine the crucial aspect of development. Within the framework of the deliberations for the Agenda for Development, we must intensify our efforts to strengthen international cooperation and to enhance the role and capacity of the United Nations to meet this challenge.

We endorse the Secretary-General's view that the best course of action for preventing and resolving conflicts is through preventive diplomacy and preventive deployment in order to avoid costly politico-military operations. Preventive diplomacy can take many forms, including quiet diplomacy, early warning and activation of the existing United Nations mechanisms of mediation and arbitration. Preventive diplomacy has to be translated into preventive action. It should be a proactive policy and not a passive or belated response to conflicts after they have erupted. The United Nations should play its primary role of facilitating peaceful settlement of disputes between parties, no party being given a veto in imposing its will or in offering arbitrary justifications for illegal actions.

Pakistan believes that United Nations peacekeeping exemplifies the sustained political commitment of Member States to the concept of collective security and to the maintenance of international peace and security. Within the framework of the United Nations Charter, peacekeeping is a crucial element in addressing the root causes of conflicts and in promoting reconciliation between the parties.

Despite enormous difficulties and the heavy costs involved, Pakistan has been in the forefront of United Nations peacekeeping efforts. We are one of the very few countries who have strongly advocated a United Nations peacekeeping role, and even offered our services in areas of high risk. At present Pakistan is the largest troop-contributing country in United Nations peacekeeping operations. We are therefore fully aware of the great difficulties, referred to in the Secretary General's report, regarding peacekeeping operations and resources. It is indeed ironic that the financial crisis of the Organization has hit troop contributors from the developing countries. Troop contributors should not be made to finance the shortfalls that result from the failure of some Member States to pay their own assessed contributions.

In his 1994 annual report, the Secretary-General noted that Jammu and Kashmir was one of the oldest unresolved conflicts still on the United Nations agenda. The United Nations oldest peacekeeping operation, the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), has been continuing its efforts to monitor the ceasefire line in Jammu and Kashmir since 1949. In his report, the Secretary-General warned that the level of tension in Jammu and Kashmir had increased considerably in recent years. Last year the Secretary-General reported that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir had further deteriorated, and he highlighted the urgency of seeking a political solution through meaningful dialogue.

In this year's report the Secretary-General has again expressed the hope for an early and peaceful resolution of differences between India and Pakistan, including the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. During the last three years, the Secretary- General has reiterated his offer of good offices to facilitate the search for a lasting solution to the Kashmir issue.

Over the past several years, Pakistan has explored all avenues for the resolution of this dispute. First and foremost, we have asked for a plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations, which would be an international commitment to the people of Kashmir and a binding obligation on India and Pakistan. Secondly, we have offered to hold meaningful and substantive talks on Kashmir, in either a bilateral or a multilateral framework. Thirdly, we have accepted the United Nations Secretary-General's offer to find a lasting solution to the problem. India has blatantly rejected all these overtures.

India's response to the political uprising in Kashmir has been one of brutal and unabating repression. In the last six years, it has deployed 700,000 troops to suppress the people of Jammu and Kashmir. In those six years, it has killed over 50,000 Kashmiris, imprisoned thousands of political activists and raped and dishonoured Kashmiri women. It has turned the whole of Kashmir into a military concentration camp.

Last year, when India realized that it could not crush the will of the people of Kashmir through naked aggression, it came up with two diabolical devices. First, it recruited and trained an army of renegades and mercenaries and unleashed them on unarmed Kashmiri civilians. Second, it initiated a farcical electoral process to neutralize the political leadership of Kashmir. India has failed on both counts. The renegades and mercenaries stand isolated, and the elections have been rejected by the Kashmiri population.

The leader of the puppet regime installed in Jammu and Kashmir just two days ago said himself in an interview on 7 October 1996:

> "Kashmir is not just elections. There is anti-India sentiment in the valley. It has been there since 1947."

A pro-India leader in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Bim Singh, said:

> "the Assembly elections were manipulated through administrative skill and fraud. In the 1987 elections, the people voted and were robbed, while in the 1996 polls the voters were robbed in absentia."

The Telegraph, an Indian newspaper, wrote on 17 September 1996:

> "Jawans [that is, Indian army personnel] choked the polling booths like bees around a honey-comb ... The deeper you went into [Kashmir's] wooded hill country, the more soldiers you found, stuffed into nature's lovely crevices like hay in sacks."

An Indian army soldier overseeing the elections was quoted as saying:

> "What kind of election is this? No polling agent, no election agent, no polling list, no sign of parties or their candidates. We are having to do all their work. We might well have contested [the elections] ourselves."

Immediately after completing the farce of elections, India has now started targeting civilians. Ten to 20 Kashmiris are being killed by the Indian army every day. The Indian occupation forces have declared their intention to continue their orgy of killing in Kashmir. Today Kashmir's genuine political leaders in Indian-held Kashmir are in jail.

The Jammu and Kashmir dispute is a critical threat to peace and security in a critically important region of the world. The tensions generated there threaten both regional and international peace and security. That is why we consider it absolutely vital that the United Nations should intercede to promote a just and peaceful solution to this dispute.

We agree with the Secretary-General that the search for a political solution to the issue of Jammu and Kashmir through meaningful dialogue "is a matter of urgency". *(A/51/1, para. 806)*

The main stumbling block to this dialogue is India's obduracy. The moment any round of negotiation starts, India takes a historically incorrect and legally invalid stance that Jammu and Kashmir is a part of India. There is a virtual stalemate in Indo-Pakistan dialogue. Therefore, there is a need for the United Nations Secretary-General's intercession to initiate his mediatory efforts.

As a first step, we propose that the Secretary-General consider appointing a special representative who could collect correct information about the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and facilitate the process for a meaningful dialogue with a view to a lasting solution to the Kashmir issue.

The United Nations is passing through a critical phase of its history. Many feel that the Organization has lost its sense of direction and has not been able to come to terms with some of its inherent weaknesses which were swept under the carpet for far too long by the cold war. Many of the issues emanating from these weaknesses were brought back squarely onto the table during the course of deliberations in the high-level working groups and other meetings earlier this year.

Unfortunately, no solutions have yet been found for any of the major problems. The absence of the necessary political will on the part of many major actors, who appear unwilling to adjust to the need for fundamental reorganization, is responsible for the deep turmoil in which we find ourselves.

The responsibility is ours, here in the General Assembly, to break this deadlock. The only question that we are facing is whether we have the vision and the political commitment to depart from an Alice-in-Wonderland approach of business-as-usual in order to tackle the real problems of a real world.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): Allow me first of all to express my delegation's satisfaction with the manner in which Ambassador Razali has steered the work of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly since its opening. We look forward to his able stewardship in the demanding months ahead. We also wish to express our deep gratitude to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and revealing report on the work of the Organization (A/51/1) which is before us today. My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made by Colombia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

While we have called for reform and restructuring of the Organization in order to make it more effective, democratic, transparent and responsive to the needs of Member States, that reform should not be construed as a mere downsizing exercise, for that could result in a weakened and ineffective Organization. Reform of the Secretariat should not be approached merely as a cost-cutting exercise without due consideration to programme delivery. The principal objective should be to enhance the effectiveness of the Organization. Cost-cutting per se does not guarantee the attainment of that objective.

Taking into account the changes that are taking place in our "global village", it is imperative that we enhance and strengthen the multinational system so that our Organization can respond effectively to the growing needs of the international community. In this connection, the Secretary-General rightly observes that change in the Organization

> "should be perceived not as an imposition, not as compromising the objectives of the Charter, but as adapting structures and methods to the new global

environment that the Organization has helped to bring about." *(A/51/1, para. 6)*

While we agree that there are three main levels of institutional reform, it is clear that the mandate to reform and the programme of work of the Secretariat are the prerogative of Member States, through the General Assembly. The Secretariat, however, is responsible for the proper implementation of that mandate. The Secretariat should not attempt to find ways of circumventing decisions of the intergovernmental machinery. Any attempt to pursue the reform and restructuring of the Organization in haste, without the authority and support of the legislative authority, runs the risk of transforming the United Nations into an Organization that serves the interests of the few.

A fortnight ago the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Zimbabwe stated in this Assembly that our primary objective in reform should be to reaffirm the role of the General Assembly as the decision-making body of the entire United Nations system. Any process of restructuring and revitalization or strengthening should necessarily redress the erosion of the accountability to the General Assembly of the principal and subsidiary organs, and the specialized agencies of the United Nations.

The continued existence of the open-ended working groups of the General Assembly, which are at various stages of their work, is testimony to the legislative body's commitment to reform and revitalize our Organization. The forty-ninth session assigned the task of restructuring the Secretariat and the General Assembly to the Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System. That Group, which presented its first report to the fiftieth session, is charged both with a thorough review of the work of the various entities and with determining future trends and the role of the Organization. In our view, attempts to implement reforms in a selective manner will result in undermining the role of that Working Group as well as the credibility of the General Assembly itself. It would be prudent to wait for the decisions of this and other working groups before implementing any reforms.

Zimbabwe is fully aware of the financial crisis this Organization is facing, mainly because of the failure of certain Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions. The failure to meet financial obligations and attempts to reform the Organization by circumventing the General Assembly serve to further paralyse the Organization and erode the principle of representativity.

During the fifty-first session, the Informal Open-ended Working Group on An Agenda for Peace is expected to continue its work on two remaining sub-items: preventive diplomacy and peacemaking; and post-conflict peace-building. We believe that the General Assembly holds the key role to play in post-conflict peace-building, since this is a reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction phase. The Secretary-General's proposals on preventive diplomacy contained in the Supplement to "An Agenda for Peace" deserve our support insofar as they seek to prevent and to contain conflicts between States. We would, however, like to emphasize that the twin principles of request and consent should always be respected.

We are perturbed that in paragraph 652 of his report, the Secretary-General seeks to change the term "preventive diplomacy" to "preventive action" while the General Assembly is still grappling with the definition of preventive diplomacy. These new and undefined terminologies, including "peace operations", might throw the entire process into confusion. While we commend the United Nations for its humanitarian activities in areas of conflict such as Somalia, Liberia and Angola, humanitarian interventions should be linked to development in order to give the people affected a more predictable and sustained source of livelihood.

We note that issues pertaining to development do not receive the same priority. But when they do, they are linked to conflict resolution. It will be recalled that the developing countries insisted in 1992, after the Secretary-General had published his report "An Agenda for Peace" that there should be an Agenda for Development because of our firm conviction that development is a precondition for peace.

We agree with the Secretary-General that the Agenda for Development has the potential to provide an important blueprint for international development cooperation. However, given the attitudes so far shown in the negotiations, my delegation has serious doubts that that potential will be fully realized. Of particular concern to us are the attempts by some in our midst to renegotiate the agreements and commitments already entered into at recent major world conferences. The Agenda for Development will be of no practical value to the developing countries if it limits itself to an analysis of the world economic outlook while failing to put forward specific action-oriented measures for implementation in an integrated and coordinated manner. In addition, this

exercise should place the United Nations at the centre of international cooperation for development.

My delegation is satisfied with the outstanding work being carried out by United Nations programmes and funds with meagre resources. Despite underfunded budgets that are leaner every year, United Nations developmental activities in the field have made a difference in the lives of ordinary people in our cities and villages. However, their performance is being seriously undermined by waning public support in the developed countries.

Numerous reforms have been proposed, or are already being implemented, to change the programming arrangements, management style and funding mechanisms of United Nations programmes and funds. While we agree that there is a need to increase efficiency in the delivery of programmes, we also caution that reform should not be an interminable, open-ended exercise. The corporate culture that the United Nations programmes and funds have been trying to instil and to promote can have only a marginal effect if innovation is pursued for its own sake. I say this because for the last three years or so, we have been overwhelmed by a rapid succession of perhaps well-intentioned, but ill-defined and poorly understood proposals for change. These include, among others, new successor programming arrangements, country strategy notes and country cooperation frameworks.

Effective delivery of programmes should manifest itself in the improved lives of their beneficiaries. In order to profit from these reforms, the beneficiaries, who should also be the active agents of change, should understand the full import and value of the proposed reforms. If the recipients understand change only when they experience a reduced level of funding for a country programme, as happened to my country in the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), this obviously sends confusing, if not wrong, signals. We believe that changes to criteria, to methods of funding or to the longevity of programming cycles will not in themselves be a credible substitute for strong political commitment to increasing resources for development.

In the concluding chapter, and in paragraph 1140 in particular, the Secretary-General alludes to a set of new directions and ideas for future restructuring of the Organization through the formation of clusters. These include peace and security, human rights, humanitarian assistance, economic and social analysis, and operational activities for development. The report is not crystal-clear on the content of, and linkages between, these clusters. The criteria for selecting the clusters approach are not clear. While we recognize that the Secretary-General is the chief administrative officer of the Organization, the concurrence of Member States is critical to the discharge of his mandate. We caution against any reform measures that seek to undo what has been accomplished in the recent past. Rather, we should build on this.

For instance, the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD IX) reached agreement on development. UNCTAD should therefore retain its unique ability to offer a comprehensive treatment of development under one roof. It must be given the means to implement the programme of work to which all Member States committed themselves only four months ago.

I wish to conclude by stating that my delegation believes that initiatives concerning simplification of the Secretariat structures, regrouping of its activities and assigning priorities to its programme of work are of a substantive nature and should not be considered merely managerial or administrative. Any modifications or changes in that regard, therefore, should be left to the various Working Groups established by the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. It is expected that upon resumption of their activities, these bodies shall provide appropriate advice to the General Assembly on required steps, the magnitude of changes and adequacy of resources for proper sustainability of the Organization and its enhanced operations. In this endeavour, the Secretary-General is expected to provide all necessary services and information, in particular as relates to the mandated tasks of these Working Groups, in order to assist them in their deliberations and in the fulfilment of their mandate.

The Acting President *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to inform members that the representative of Costa Rica has asked to participate in the debate on this agenda item. Given that the list of speakers was closed at noon today, may I take it that the General Assembly has no objection to that representative's being added to the list of speakers?

It was so decided.

Mr. Erwa (Sudan) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: I should like at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization, which touches on many issues that are the focus of the Organization's attention. Our views on these issues were expressed earlier this week in the statement

made by my country's Foreign Minister before the Assembly.

I will therefore limit myself in this connection to what was included in the section of the report entitled "The Humanitarian Imperative", particularly that part related to Operation Lifeline Sudan, which stated that the Government of Sudan has restricted the delivery of relief supplies. We would like to remind the Assembly that the Government of Sudan, of its own initiative, declared its willingness to cooperate with the international community to relieve the suffering of those affected by the war that was kindled by the rebel movement in the southern part of Sudan. To alleviate suffering and mitigate the effects of war, we initiated Operation Lifeline Sudan so that the international community could channel its actions through the United Nations. How could the Government of Sudan be restricting the delivery of relief supplies, when it initiated the whole process?

Seven years have passed since the establishment of this operation, which has become a model for relief-supply distribution operations and for international cooperation and harmonization of national efforts in the service of humanitarian objectives.

Operation Lifeline Sudan depends on the element of trust. Our trust in the impartiality, efficiency and transparency of the United Nations led us to authorize it to coordinate the work of the Operation. Although we consider it a success, the Operation faces certain difficulties. Some of the international organizations participating in the Operation complain that their access to the affected population is restricted. In addition, the Government of Sudan believes that it is not participating sufficiently in the Operation.

The General Assembly discussed this issue last year and included a paragraph in its resolution on humanitarian aid to Sudan that provides for full participation by the Government of Sudan in Operation Lifeline Sudan. The implementation of that resolution, by ensuring full participation by the Government of Sudan, will promote trust among the participants in the Operation, strengthening its prospects for success. It would also solve the problem of providing access by the parties to the Operation to the affected population.

The Government of Sudan reiterates its determination to assist all peoples affected by war, in any part of the world, including those besieged in areas of rebellion.

My country has witnessed positive political developments on a large scale this past year, which have led to progress on the path to peace. Key rebel factions have chosen peace and rejected war. Efforts in this direction continue to be deployed, and we hope that other factions also will choose peace. Therefore, the problem of relief in Sudan does not constitute a severe emergency. Peace has created a great deal of stability and security, which has made relief-supply distribution easier and cheaper. Peace has also emphasized the need for the return of the displaced and for the rehabilitation and rebuilding of the areas destroyed by war. This will require the participation of the international community, and we urge it to respond to the United Nations call concerning Operation Lifeline Sudan for 1996.

The rebel movement is fully responsible for the obstacles still impeding the delivery of relief supplies, such as the kidnapping of relief workers, destabilization, manipulation, the plundering of supplies, and attacks against innocent civilians in their camps. The most recent of these events was the detention of relief workers three weeks ago. All of these practices were overlooked in the report, which focuses on alleged government measures that restrict the delivery of relief supplies. This position prejudices the principles of transparency and impartiality upon which the work of the Organization is based.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize the willingness of the Government of Sudan fully to cooperate with the United Nations and all parties concerned to facilitate the delivery of relief supplies to all citizens in need. I reiterate that Sudan, which initiated Operation Lifeline Sudan in an unprecedented undertaking and a model of commitment to human rights, especially in circumstances of war — cannot be perceived as impeding this Operation. I emphasize that the Sudan will continue efforts to establish peace in the country so there will be no need for relief.

Mr. Hamdoon (Iraq) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: We would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization (A/51/1). The report outlines clearly the challenges and opportunities that face the United Nations in an increasingly complex world. The report summarizes the important measures taken in many areas over the past year in order to reform the Organization, strengthen its role and enhance its performance, so that it will be capable of responding effectively to these challenges, utilizing these

opportunities and achieving the goals enshrined in the Charter.

While we commend the Secretary-General and the Secretariat staff for their dedicated efforts to attain that cherished goal, we reaffirm our conviction that the Secretary-General's tireless efforts will not lead to the desired reform of this world Organization unless all Member States work together towards that end. How, for instance, can we achieve reform of the Security Council when some influential Powers insist on keeping the Council a club for the wealthy, refusing to recognize the intellectual, political, economic and social transformations that have taken place in the world and that must be reflected in the composition and methods of work of the Council? How can the financial situation of the United Nations be reformed when the Organization is the hostage of one major Power, which refuses to fulfil its financial obligations towards the Organization? How can we revitalize the role of the United Nations in the economic and social spheres when the countries of the North remain reluctant to give the countries of the South the opportunity that they deserve in building an international economic order that will ensure sustainable development and equitable development opportunities?

These questions and many others make it abundantly clear that the core of reform is the political will of Member States to prepare the United Nations to enter the next century as a true representative of the hopes and aspirations of all peoples.

In the chapter entitled "Preventing, controlling and resolving conflict", there is a subsection entitled, "Iraq-Kuwait". That section begins by stating that the

> "easing or lifting [of sanctions] is blocked by Iraq's continuing failure to comply with a number of obligations in the relevant Security Council resolutions." *(A/51/1, para. 807)*

My remarks will focus primarily on this quote, because the use of the phrase "Iraq's failure to comply" is not accurate. Thus, all subsequent conclusions based on that idea are not correct either.

I should like to elaborate. It has become common knowledge that the sanctions resolutions contain vague and unclear demands and leave to the implementing Power the freedom to interpret what is required, without defining a timetable or technical modalities for their implementation. Let me cite two examples. In regard to the question of prisoners and missing persons, Iraq has fully and sincerely fulfilled its obligations. Since 1991, it has repatriated more than 6,500 prisoners, detainees and missing persons. Iraq continues to cooperate with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the search for other missing persons; those who were found have been repatriated. Iraq continues to cooperate with the ICRC in order to resolve this humanitarian issue.

Is it admissible then to use the phrase "failure to comply" to describe Iraq's attitude and behaviour regarding this issue? Everyone recognizes that the search for missing persons, in the aftermath of a war that saw the use of bombs more than eight times as destructive as the Hiroshima bomb, will require many long years and perhaps decades. The Americans know this firsthand, since they continue to search to no avail for some of their missing soldiers from the Viet Nam war.

Is it admissible that 4,500 Iraqi infants die monthly because of the lack of food and medicine, as was stated by a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) representative a few days ago? Is it admissible to allow health and nutritional conditions in Iraq to deteriorate to the point where an estimated 4 million people — the majority of them children under five — are in danger of severe physical and mental damage as a result of malnutrition, as indicated in paragraph 821 of the Secretary-General's report? And all that because there are 600 missing persons who have not yet been found. Is it admissible to starve, even kill children in order to bring pressure to bear on the Iraqi Government in an area in which Iraq is cooperating?

With regard to the question of the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, which is covered in detail in the Secretary-General's report, the use of the phrase "failure to comply" to describe Iraq's conduct is wrong and unjust. Iraq has been cooperating with the United Nations Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) since they began their work in March 1991 to achieve the goals set out in section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991). The semi-annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency, dated 7 October 1996 and submitted to the Security Council, states in paragraph 29,

> "All quantities of special nuclear material (highly enriched uranium or plutonium) found in Iraq have been removed, and the industrial infrastructure which Iraq had set up to produce and

> weaponize special nuclear material has been destroyed." *(S/1996/833, para. 29)*

Paragraph 28 of the same report states that:

> "In the period since the last report to the Council, the IAEA has not seen instances of activities, or the presence, in Iraq, of equipment or materials proscribed by those resolutions."

and that:

> "The IAEA continues with the rigorous implementation of its plan for the monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions".

In the same paragraph, the report speaks to Iraq's cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency:

> "The Iraqi counterpart has continued to cooperate with the IAEA in a productive way."

Is it reasonable then, to speak of Iraq's failure to comply, and is it admissible for marginal details and old documents to serve as pretexts for claiming that Iraq has failed to comply with its obligations, while ignoring its cooperation over a period of more than five years? During that time, the essential requirements of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) have been implemented. Iraq has turned millions of documents over to the United Nations Special Commission; the report of the Secretary-General confirms in paragraph 810 that more than 1 million pages of documents were handed over in August 1995. Yet the Special Commission continues to search for more documents. This situation raises legal and moral issues regarding the extent of requirements under Security Council resolutions, especially as these resolutions link the implementation of their provisions to the lifting or easing of the comprehensive sanctions regime imposed on Iraq, which forbids the import of even medicine and food.

On 10 July 1996 the General Assembly ad hoc working group on sanctions adopted a paper containing some basic principles that must be considered when imposing, and during the imposition of, sanctions. That paper emphasized that sanctions should fully accord with the provisions of the Charter; that they should have clear objectives; that there should be precise conditions for their lifting; and that they should not cause unnecessary suffering for the civilian population. The Security Council must set a timetable for the sanctions regime, taking all those factors into consideration.

The sanctions regime must also specify the steps to be taken by the country concerned in order to ensure the lifting of the sanctions. Foodstuffs, medicine and medical supplies, as well as basic medical, agricultural and educational equipment, must be exempted from the sanctions. The following question naturally comes to mind: Does the sanctions regime imposed on Iraq accord with these principles? I leave the answer to the discretion of fair-minded people.

In closing, I wish to emphasize that the sanctions regime imposed on Iraq is not only tantamount to an act of genocide against an entire people, but is also a crime in that it goes against the principles and values upon which the United Nations was founded.

Mr. Kim (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I should like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his comprehensive report (A/51/1). I should also like to thank him for his attention to the Korean question. As the report states, last year my country was hit by the heaviest floods in 100 years, and consecutive natural disasters over a period of several years have created temporary food problems. Now our people, firmly united around the great leader Comrade Kim Jong Il, are waging a nationwide campaign to repair the damage, resettle the victims, and overcome all the difficulties. I should like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to those countries and international agencies, including the United Nations, that provided sincere humanitarian assistance to our people.

The Korean question is one of the most important matters of which the United Nations remains seized. The fundamental aspect of the Korean question is the termination of foreign intervention and the reunification of the country by peaceful means. The United Nations, in its early days, intervened in Korea at the forceful demand of the Powers, and thus is one of the parties responsible for the division of Korea and the agony of the Korean people.

As is well known, the United Nations is still legally in a state of war with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The existence of the United Nations Command in South Korea is not based on any United Nations resolution. The July 1950 Security Council resolution that is often referred to as a legal basis for this Command does not mention anything about organizing it. These

historical facts show that the great Powers have abused the United Nations when dealing with the Korean question. Therefore, it is essential that the Organization correct the past with regard to this question. We regret, however, that the Secretary-General's report does not touch on the substance of the Korean question, which can be construed as meaning that the United Nations does not have the will to correct hostile relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, but does have the will to maintain them.

The Secretary-General's report mentions the continued observance of the Armistice Agreement, concluded in 1953.

The Korean Armistice Agreement of 1953 is only a temporary measure to suspend military actions between belligerent parties. It was expected that it would be transformed into a peace agreement. The Armistice Agreement cannot now prevent any accidental incidents — not to mention the reoccurrence of war — as it has become a mere scrap of paper because of the unilateral abrogation by the United States of its essential provisions.

In these circumstances, in April 1994 the Democratic People's Republic of Korea proposed to the United States the establishment of a new peace mechanism which would replace the outdated Armistice Agreement. In February 1996 the Democratic People's Republic of Korea again proposed to conclude an interim agreement as a minimal institutional mechanism to prevent armed conflicts and the recurrence of war, taking into consideration the United States policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the status of their bilateral relations. However, up to now the United States has not responded to our peace-loving proposals.

If the United Nations is really concerned about the situation on the Korean peninsula, it should correct belligerent relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by dissolving the United Nations command, retrieving the United Nations flag from the United States Army in South Korea and assisting in the establishment of a new peace mechanism to replace the outdated Armistice mechanism, which is of no use for peace and security on the Korean peninsula.

In this regard, we think the report of the Secretary-General should present measures and recommendations intended to correct the unsavoury past history of the United Nations in Korea and to contribute to the peaceful settlement of the Korean question.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria): My delegation would like first of all to thank the Secretary-General for his very comprehensive and forward-looking report on the work of our Organization. Its sheer volume, which increases annually, enables us to imagine how wide and varied the activities of our Organization have been in the common service of mankind. These activities vary from international peace and security to international economic cooperation; from humanitarian and relief activities to technical assistance, and from the promotion of human rights to the monitoring, organization and certification of elections within Member States.

My delegation observed from the report that United Nations activities in the fields of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacemaking, peacekeeping and humanitarian activities — particularly emergency relief activities — continue to engage most of our Organization's attention and have heavy resource implications, to the detriment of development efforts. Of course, we would have loved the United Nations to focus more of its attention on, and devote the bulk of its resources to, socio-economic activities aimed at poverty alleviation, but we are painfully aware that there can be no development without peace and no sustainable peace without development.

The linkage between the two justifies the attention the General Assembly continues to devote to the Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace" and to "An Agenda for Development". We note the progress that has been achieved by the various General Assembly working groups and urge the early completion of the exercise in order to produce agreements on the major, defining themes.

With regard to peacekeeping operations, we welcome the new efforts in improved United Nations cooperation with regional organizations, as envisaged under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. However, in doing so we wish to emphasize that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lies squarely with the United Nations. Moreover, the international community should, in our view, give concrete logistical and financial assistance to regional and subregional bodies such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for peacekeeping efforts in their respective areas.

We also welcome the observation in paragraphs 651 and 652 of the Secretary-General's report which identify

preventive diplomacy and peacemaking as critical elements in preventing crises. In this connection, we note with satisfaction the measures introduced by the Secretary-General to enhance the Organization's capacity to discharge what he refers to as "preventive action" through early warning, quiet diplomacy and, in some cases, preventive deployment. The joint and coordinated action of the key departments in this area — namely the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) — need to be further enhanced. We agree with the Secretary-General that preventive activities could help prevent human suffering and serve as an alternative to costly politico-military operations to resolve conflicts after they have broken out.

The increasing globalization and interdependence of the world economy mask one disturbing reality: the continued impoverishment of the large population of the countries of the South. More integrated efforts will be clearly required of the United Nations system if the objectives set out in "An Agenda for Development" are to be achieved. It is imperative that we improve the system's ability to develop and to implement social and economic development programmes in a more coordinated and coherent manner.

We also support the increasing efforts to enhance coordination and collaboration between the Bretton Woods institutions and United Nations bodies in order to work in closer harmony for the mutual benefit of all, particularly the majority, who are in developing countries. In this regard, we look forward to an early conclusion of the work of the General Assembly with regard to the elaboration of an Agenda for Development.

The report of the Secretary-General demonstrates clearly the challenges and opportunities which now face the United Nations in an increasingly complex global environment. It also outlines the significant reform measures and staff rationalization which have been undertaken in many areas of the Secretariat by the Secretary-General over the past four and a half years in order to strengthen the role and functioning of the Organization to respond effectively to the new challenges and opportunities at the dawn of a new millennium.

Unfortunately, however, all the reform measures that have been implemented will not produce the required results as long as we continue to starve the United Nations of the requisite financial resources. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria remarked during the general debate,

> "A vibrant and responsible United Nations requires an assured financial base. The failure or unwillingness of Member States to pay their assessed contributions as and when due is a dereliction of Charter obligations and a threat to the survival of the United Nations." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Plenary Meetings, 21st meeting, p. 13)*

In this connection, we note the proposal of the Secretary-General in paragraph 187 of his report (A/51/1) concerning the ceiling of the scale of assessments, and wish to stress that any review of the scale must take into account the principles of capacity to pay and special responsibility of any Member under the Charter.

My delegation believes that we should make clear the difference between the imperative for any organization like the United Nations constantly to devise ways and means to enhance its performance, its effectiveness and its efficiency in order to meet current challenges, and the rationalization that is induced by the deliberate refusal of certain Members to pay their dues.

Reform is necessary but should not be used to undermine the capacity of the Organization to carry out its mandates. The present rationalization exercise has led to the cutting of some mandated programmes and services, as well as the reduction of personnel devoted to developmental activities, without much analysis or appreciation of their relevance to the lot of the poor. After all, if we were all to pay our outstanding obligations, the United Nations would not be experiencing any financial problems or, worse still, a crisis.

The crisis manifests itself in some unacceptable situations such as arrears in reimbursement to troop-contributing nations. As the Secretary-General himself observed, it is absurd that our reward to countries, including some of the world's poorest, that send their sons and daughters into harm's way on behalf of the international community, is to impose an additional financial burden on them. Troop contributors are in effect financing the shortfalls that result when some Member States fail to pay their assessed contributions on time and in full. Reforms will not cure this anomaly; only payment of assessed dues will.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) *(interpretation from French)*: My delegation would like to express its full support for the statement made this morning by Colombia on behalf of the non-aligned countries on the matter we are discussing today.

We welcome with satisfaction the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization. We thank him warmly for the report, just as we thank him for the various initiatives he has taken to improve the functioning of the Organization and to enhance the effectiveness of the Secretariat.

As a reflection of the various and wide-ranging activities of the United Nations, this year's document is of very special importance because it gives a rather reassuring picture, on the basis of our many achievements and the reaffirmation of continued commitment to the goals of the United Nations by the world leaders who met here a year ago. However, frustration is still felt by most countries of the world because of difficulties in meeting requirements of their own economic and social development.

We agree with the Secretary-General on the close correlation and interaction between development and peace. However, in such an important document as the report of the Secretary-General, it is important that development be a goal in itself. That is to say, it constitutes a separate chapter as a requirement that must receive the priority interest of the entire international community, as a right of countries and peoples and as a basis for peace in the broadest possible sense. Future action, both by the General Assembly and the Organization as a whole, should deal with continuing and strengthening efforts to ensure the full implementation of commitments made, in particular in the framework of the major United Nations conferences, to bring about progress in international cooperation for development.

The important questions taken up by the Secretary-General in his report obviously include the question of the reform of the Organization. In this respect, we believe that the deliberations within the working groups on the reform of the United Nations system and of the Security Council should be given priority attention by Member States during this session so as to speed up discussion and see to it that the goals sought are met. These include the strengthening of the role of the General Assembly as a universal body symbolizing the sovereign equality of States, in accordance with the Charter, the democratization of the Security Council and the enhancement of the transparency of its activities, in accordance with the new geopolitical realities of the world. If we are expeditiously to complete negotiations on reforming the Council and arrive at consensus, there needs to be a spirit of compromise on the part of the various States and groups of States concerned.

The ongoing reform of the Secretariat should also be continued in order to enhance the efficiency of the administrative structure of the Organization and to further rationalize its functioning. However, reform of the Secretariat should encompass, *inter alia*, an equitable distribution of high-level posts among nationals from the various regions of the world. It goes without saying that our Organization cannot meet its responsibilities appropriately and that the global reform we are discussing cannot be followed through to the end and achieve the desired results if the financial crisis the Organization has been experiencing for several years continues. Once again, we affirm here the urgent need to put an end to this state of affairs. Member States are duty-bound to fulfil their financial obligations to the United Nations by paying their budgetary contributions on time and in full.

The vast and multidimensional spectrum of activities, as well as the other questions taken up by the Secretary-General in his report, cannot be covered in such a brief and general debate. We therefore think it is highly desirable that each year a summary, a short version of the report of the Secretary-General, be published and highlight the main issues on the agenda of the United Nations and the major problems it has to face.

Mr. Danesh-Yazdi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and informative report on the work of the Organization, in which many important national, political, economic and social issues have been discussed and analysed. In the light of the analysis of the activities and reform efforts of the Organization in the past year, the Secretary-General's vision of the future of the Organization is of a United Nations that works.

Because of the importance of the report of the Secretary-General in mapping out the future of the Organization, we believe it deserves serious and careful consideration by Member States. We welcome this opportunity to make some preliminary observations. Of course, the report requires more in-depth consideration in a more appropriate venue. The Open-ended High-level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United

Nations System dealt with some topics of the report during the last session of the General Assembly.

My delegation fully endorses the statement made by the representative of Colombia on behalf of the non-aligned countries. At the same time, I would like to make the following preliminary observations of a general nature to highlight my delegation's understanding of the priorities of the United Nations agenda, the division of responsibility and the manner and assessment of reform and of the implementation of General Assembly mandates.

As the Secretary-General pointed out in his report, the recent major international conferences on development, as well as the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, provided the opportunity for the international community to commit itself to give the twenty-first century

> "a United Nations equipped, financed and structured to serve its peoples" *(A/51/1, p. iii)*

in whose name it was established. In this respect, we agree with him that the reform process is neither an imposition, nor a compromise over the objectives of the Charter. However, these endeavours can bear fruit if the crucial need for and legitimate expectation of the developing world to place the issue of development, both as a prerequisite for peace and stability and as a right, at the forefront of the agenda of the United Nations is fully taken into account. We share the view of the Secretary-General that:

> "Development and democratization can themselves be the most effective forms of conflict prevention." *(ibid., para. 1133)*

However, issues related to development have received lesser priority and, where they are addressed in the report, it is in the narrow confine of conflict prevention.

Furthermore, we share the concern expressed by the Secretary-General over the fact that the United Nations is:

> "facing a sharp decline in international development assistance" *(ibid., para. 1134)*

I would like to emphasize that the success of the reform efforts depends, to a great extent, on the degree to which developed countries fulfil their commitments in terms of the provision of new and additional financial resources.

Disarmament has traditionally been at the top of the agenda of the United Nations. However, there has been a discernable trend in the Organization in recent years to de-emphasize the role of disarmament, particularly at the macro level, in strengthening international peace and security. The place accorded to the issue of disarmament in the contents of the report of the Secretary- General and the minor treatment of macro-disarmament in the main body of the report are among the indications of this trend. In addition, major developments in the field of disarmament have not been adequately addressed in the report before us. They include: the recent historic advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the illegality of nuclear weapons; the continuing qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons; the threatening revision of the nuclear policy of nuclear-weapon States; the refusal of the biggest possessors of chemical weapons to ratify the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the race among the largest producers of conventional weapons to transfer such weapons to already destabilized regions of the world, such as the Middle East; and the proliferation of secret, discriminatory and non-negotiated arrangements under the pretext of non-proliferation.

The issues raised in the international debate over preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building are stimulating and challenging. In my delegation's view, these activities should be devised, developed, and undertaken in accordance with the objectives and principles of the Charter. Definitions, objectives, terms of reference and means of implementation of such activities should be clearly elaborated by Member States so as to uphold the cardinal principles of the sovereign equality of States, respect for the political independence of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and inviolability of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

Peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building are two kinds of United Nations operations with the common goal of maintaining peace and security in the world. However, their functions are different and, in the view of my delegation, the General Assembly should have the key role in the post-conflict peace-building activities of the United Nations in close cooperation with other relevant organs of the United Nations system.

The Secretary-General distinguishes three different types of reform: intergovernmental, organizational and

managerial. As for the division of responsibility on organizational reform, the report states that

> "it is a joint responsibility of the Secretary-General and the Member States" *(ibid., para. 11)*

while the managerial reform is presented as being purely within the discretion of the Secretary-General.

It should be noted that not all managerial reforms are purely of an non-contentious, administrative nature, falling within the purview of the Secretary-General. Any major reform will of necessity have a direct implication for the implementation of the work programme mandated by the governing bodies. While the Secretary-General is the chief administrative officer, he should, in the process of implementation of General Assembly resolutions and decisions, keep the General Assembly informed of any changes and keep the channel of communication and consultation open.

The report of the Secretary-General should provide an analysis of the effects of restructuring, its programme implications, and shifts in the resources approved by the General Assembly.

One of the measures taken in balancing the budget as presented by the Secretary-General is a 12 per cent reduction in posts (in comparison with 10 years ago). Even accepting efficiency increases, it is hard to imagine how the increased responsibilities entrusted to the Organization by Member States could be carried out with such a reduced staff base. This drastic reduction is bound to have a negative impact on programme delivery, as is evidenced by various paragraphs, such as paragraphs 25 and 56, which refer to the lack of resources in support of development issues.

The report briefly refers to a set of new directions and ideas for future restructuring of the Organization in its concluding chapter, and proposes the formation of a small number of clusters involving all entities of the Organization. In this context, we believe that our efforts should focus on identifying the roots and causes of the maladies of several funds and programmes and trying to remedy this malaise in order to enable them to implement their mandates in full rather than to cluster and undermine them. The accumulated experience and expertise of these agencies, bodies, funds, programmes and regional commissions are valid instruments for enhancing international cooperation for development — an objective that was impossible to achieve in the era of the cold war.

In the final analysis, we continue to maintain that the proposed reform concerning clustering should not be devised, developed, and carried out in a manner that virtually leads to dismantling or undermining the funds and programmes with mandates in development.

We would like to be able to share the Secretary-General's view that last year's reform efforts and activities represent a vision for a "United Nations that works" (A/51/1, para. 1144). We consider the Secretary-General's view of the future of the United Nations to be constructive — one that could serve the growth and centrality of the United Nations in the post-cold war era. However, the continued undue influence exercised by certain Members not only on the Organization but also on inter-State relations, the diminished desire to join multilateral problem-solving efforts, and above all the use of power politics and unilateral measures to impose the self-serving narrow interests of one or a small group of nations over others can overshadow the Secretary-General's vision of a "United Nations that works".

Mr. Fulci (Italy): I wish to thank the Secretary-General for the impressive documentation he has provided in his report on the work of our Organization, and I wish to thank him especially for the political orientation of his introductory remarks and some specific sections. More than in previous years the report provides some basic guidelines for the Organization to follow. We welcome this new approach.

The Secretary-General's report highlights various issues I wish to discuss, following the order in which they are presented in the report: first, the strengthening of the United Nations system; second, development, humanitarian action and human rights; and third, peace actions.

On the first point, coordinating a comprehensive strategy and strengthening the United Nations system, I am pleased to recall that my country has made an ongoing contribution to the activities of all five working groups. Although their main goals were not achieved, significant steps forward were made in identifying the most urgent problems. One of these is the reform of the Security Council. My country is against any extension of the status quo. The time has come to open the door and let the future in. To this end, Italy has presented a proposal that, in the more than two and a half years since the beginning of this exercise, has received public statements of support or interest from 77 countries, some

of whom see it as a fall-back position in the event that a consensus cannot be reached on the other proposals tabled.

The report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council (A/50/47) acknowledges that granting permanent seats to only two countries is "unacceptable". The report also informs us that in the deliberations of the Working Group the proposal for new permanent seats received "both support and objections". But instead "wide support" was received for an increase in non-permanent seats in case of no agreement on the increase of other categories of membership. Consequently, it seems to us that an increase in non-permanent seats is the most natural road to follow, and in fact this is the underlying principle of both the Non-Aligned Movement's position and the Italian proposal. As Foreign Minister Dini said in his address to the General Assembly:

> "We are willing to discuss and adhere to a formula that is not inconsistent with the fundamental principles that govern our own proposal." *(A/51/PV.10, p. 5)*

And I do not need to recall here that these principles are democracy, equitable geographic representation, transparency and efficiency.

In other words, we say "no" to new regimes of privilege, and we say "yes" to the participation of all and the exclusion of none. In our opinion, the general debate that just ended yesterday has confirmed this trend, and we are encouraged by the degree of support expressed for our proposal. I repeat, we are for participation, and not marginalization or exclusion. We are for openness and transparency. Above all, we are for democracy and against elitism.

This approach applies not only to institutional reform but also to procedures. Therefore we strongly believe that the steps taken in the Security Council by Argentina, New Zealand and the Czech Republic, and followed later on by Italy and others, toward improving the transparency of the Council should be continued, by making it not only regular practice but a requirement for the Security Council to hold consultations with interested parties before decisions are made, especially decisions that concern them directly.

Other reforms are also urgently needed, especially to streamline the work of this Assembly, reduce duplication and overlap, and place the Organization on a sounder financial footing. At the same time as we pay homage to what has already been done, let us not forget that there are bodies such as, for instance, the Trusteeship Council that no longer have any reason to exist as they are now. Here I wish to reiterate my country's position in favour of granting special consideration to the proposal submitted by Malta aimed at strengthening the Trusteeship Council's mandate by conferring upon it the function of guardian and trustee of the so-called "common heritage of mankind", the wealth that belongs to all.

A similar spirit should also prevail in confronting the financial situation of the Organization. Italy has repeatedly expressed its full support for the position defined and officially presented by the European Union. We believe that considerable efforts have already been made to balance the budget and to eliminate waste. To this end I wish to commend specifically the excellent job done by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, Mr. Joseph Connor, whose leadership has been invaluable in already achieving some ground-breaking results. In common with many others, however, we also believe that the policy of budget cuts must never get in the way of the Organization's achieving its priority objectives: assuring international peace and security, promoting development, supporting democracy, and safeguarding human rights.

Italy continues to support with the same conviction the position of the European Union regarding the need for all Member States to pay their assessments in full, on time and without condition. It is also in favour of a review of the scale of assessments based on capacity to pay and a substantial reduction or elimination of the floor.

The second chapter of the Secretary-General's report deals with building the foundations of peace, development, humanitarian action and human rights. Italy has been an enthusiastic supporter of an Agenda for Development from the very beginning. In this regard, I wish to recall the participation in 1994 World Hearings of our expert in development issues, Mrs. Emma Bonino, who is currently the Commissioner of the European Community Humanitarian Office. Italy believes that "An Agenda for Development" must constitute a key document to guide the future action, not only of our Organization but also of our national Governments. The Open-ended Working Group presided over by the Permanent Representatives of Benin and Sweden, Ambassadors Mongbé and Osvald, has undoubtedly made remarkable progress. Regrettably, the group was not able

to conclude its negotiations by the end of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, but we hope that the work can be resumed and completed during the current session and that an Agenda for Development will address the dramatic and rapid changes taking place in the field of international cooperation, especially with the increase in globalization, liberalization and interdependence.

Still in the framework of development, Italy commends the "White Helmets" initiative launched by the enlightened President of Argentina, His Excellency Mr. Carlos Menem, and their participation in United Nations activities in the field of humanitarian relief. We have supported this initiative in concrete terms by co-sponsoring a resolution and co-funding activities in the field.

Italy attaches the utmost importance to the United Nations role in the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, which is based on historic values and principles enshrined in the Charter. We consider the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993 a landmark event. At the following session of the General Assembly, it was decided to establish the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Ambassador Jose Ayala Lasso of Ecuador, who was appointed to carry out this task, is indeed doing an excellent job in strengthening United Nations machinery in this field.

With regard to the third chapter of the report that we are examining now, on preventing, controlling and resolving conflict, it is our firm conviction that the United Nations cannot impose peace by making war. In other words, the United Nations is ill-equipped to carry out peace-enforcement operations due to a lack of the proper vocation, structure and resources. Let us mandate peace enforcement to those who can do it — namely, properly equipped regional organizations or a coalition of States. But this realization should not be taken as a signal for disengagement. Indeed, as the Secretary-General's report makes clear, in the year under review, peacekeeping operations made up the bulk of the United Nations peace operations: 17 out of 33. Above all, we are glad to say that last year, the United Nations focused more both on preventive diplomacy and on post-conflict peace-building, with special regard for bringing speedy humanitarian relief and helping rebuild economies. We were also glad to see the emphasis given to improving the rapid deployment of United Nations peacekeeping operations. We welcome the progress made in developing a rapidly deployable headquarters module, as suggested by Canada, and we support the efforts to enhance preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa, as in other parts of the world, and in further developing the system of stand-by arrangements. Friends of rapid reaction have been particularly active in this regard, and I would like here to single out the contribution and the innovative thinking of Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States.

In this context, I would like to underline that the need for more efficient logistic support and rapid deployment of peacekeeping operations recognized in the Secretary-General's report led Italy to make available, free of charge, the first United Nations logistic base in Brindisi. We have suggested a separate allocation in the peacekeeping budget for the logistic bases, as advised by the special committee on peacekeeping operations during the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. Again, what we need here in this field is action, not mere words.

The fiftieth anniversary year marked the end of one era and the beginning of a new one. As we embark on this journey, I look forward to working under the leadership of our colleague Ambassador Razali Ismail, whose deep knowledge of United Nations machinery, pragmatism, diplomatic skill and well-known impartiality are a guarantee that the new chapter which is opening in United Nations history will be a most fruitful one.

Mrs. Incera (Costa Rica) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I wish to convey my congratulations to the President of the General Assembly on his election. We are certain that his knowledge and experience will contribute significantly to the success of the work of this session of the General Assembly.

The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for presenting his report contained in document A/51/1 which contains much valuable information on the activities of the Organization and its Secretariat. I wish to take this opportunity only to point out for the record that, for the Group of 77 and China, in the Fifth Committee, paragraph 94 of the report poses difficulties. Accordingly, we wish to state that the Group of 77 and China does not accept the content of that paragraph and we request that this be duly reflected in the record.

The Acting President *(interpretation from French)*: May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization?

It was so decided.

The Acting President *(interpretation from French)*: We have thus concluded the present stage of our consideration of agenda item 10.

Announcement by the President

The President took the Chair.

The President: I should like to point out that, according to our calculations and based on the number of speakers who remain, we will have to continue the debate on Monday. Without trying to limit the right to speak, I appeal for brevity. Perhaps we could limit speeches to 10 minutes or less, as the Committees are doing. If we do not, fewer people will be able to speak or we will have to spend more time on the subject being debated. I accept that the subject is very important, but nevertheless I appeal for brevity.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.